

## **NCEC FINAL REPORT**

### **TOBACCO COMMUNITIES ASSESSMENT**

Northwest Communities' Education Center conducted tobacco community assessments in Western Washington ( four in King, Thurston) and Eastern Washington ( seven in Yakima County). Due to the shortness of preparation, time, funding and personnel, an in-depth assessment is not possible. To do a more thorough Latino Community Assessment it will be necessary to obtain a greater amount of resources to come up with better estimates of community readiness, community infrastructure and community understanding of the tobacco problem. However, this was a learning process for us which will help in the long run to develop a better instrument, process, training, and implementation community surveys. Having said that, NCEC submits the following information:

#### **SELECTION OF KEY INFORMANTS**

Each Latino individual selected needed to have a background of having extensive knowledge of their particular community. The Individuals interviewed had to come from different backgrounds, professions, age, gender, and city whenever possible. Six females (average age 36) and 5 males (average age 49) were interviewed. The backgrounds of the individuals were: social worker, case manager of troubled youth, case manager of pregnant women, veteran representative, receptionist, domestic violence counselor, a retired elderly person, and two college students from both sides of the mountains. And not surprisingly, seven were former farmworkers.

#### **INTERVIEW PROCESS AND PROTOCOL**

The key informants were advised that confidentiality would be protected and their participation is voluntary (see Attachment "A"). Each key informant was given an opportunity to look at the questionnaire so that they could have a good idea and time to formulate their answers based upon their own individual perception, understanding and experience. The interviews were tape recorded and transcribed or summarized in order to capture the essence of the information given as to tobacco prevention and control. The other 3 Attachments are: "B" for interview summaries; "C" for the individual interviews; and "D" for the Demographic Backgrounds.

#### **KEY FINDINGS**

Even though the individual selected were from Urban and Rural areas the vast majority of the responses were remarkably similar. And on that basis NCEC formulated this "Tobacco Community Assessment Report".

## **FARMWORKER COMMUNITY**

The vast majority of the Latino population in Yakima County (79,905 U.S. Census 200) are farmworkers and immigrants who are limited in English and culturally isolated from the mainstream of society. The interviewees, even from the Seattle area, felt that there is a complete absence of tobacco education and prevention programs that are geared towards the Latino farmworker population. There is a general perception that there is a great need to educate farmworker parents, youth, pregnant women, and Latinos who want to quit. It seems that cigarette smoking is the primary concern of every respondent. Tobacco usage is a new issue to the rural areas of Eastern Washington as well as the urban areas of Western Washington. In Yakima County the farmworkers issues have historically taken most of the resources of the organizations.

Those issues are: farmworker organizing; day care for migrant children; housing; emergency food for workers when the weather gets bad during the harvest of fruits like the "Cherries"; pesticides; unemployment; injured workers; English as a Second Language; Immigration; access to health services in distant rural areas; preventive health care; discrimination; police profiling; the justice system; poverty; isolation; amnesty "legalization" of immigrant people and so forth.

The critical issues are very much similar in Western Washington for the Latino communities. Seven of the key informants were born in another country other than the USA (5 from Mexico, two from El Peru and El Ecuador). So it is no wonder that the leadership in the Latino community is tied up in those social problems.

There is a common feeling that tobacco is a problem in their community and there are great concerns as to the issue that not much is being done in tobacco education, prevention and control. None really saw their leaders or organizations to be involved in any anti-tobacco except for three individuals.

The general perception is that the community leadership and resources are focused on other issues that have been burning in their community for many years and that impression led to the conclusion that in order to have an anti-tobacco program, money was needed to raise the level of awareness of the Latinos. Many key informants wondered where they could refer smokers who wanted to quit because they could not think of one. The Vietnam Veteran who smokes mentioned that people would probably not come to him but that he could refer them to the Yakima Memorial Hospital, Farm Workers Health Center or even the Veterans Administration.

## ON YOUTH

Ten of the respondents mentioned about the law prohibiting the selling of tobacco products to minors. One said that he believed that the only state policy known is not selling cigarettes to young people under the age of 18. He was not sure if the law was enforced or abided by the businesses in the local Latino communities. The Peruvian woman said that although there is a law for minors, the young people would get an older person to purchase the cigarettes for them. She also said that Latino stores sold tobacco to minors even though it was a violation. A lady health care provider expressed great concern that her pregnant clients continued smoking during their pregnancy without any concern about the babies. She further stated that tobacco was harmful to kids starting early in life. A college student mentioned that parents should be good role models to their children because their positive intervention would be a good method of prevention. That feeling was expressed by other respondents.

A counselor from the Mabton community said her community needed to address the tobacco issues for the sake of young people whom she had observed smoking cigarettes by the age of 15 and another person said that she saw kids by the age of 12 smoking. A Latina stated that the Mexican Machismo culture promoted cigarette smoking to young people. That the tobacco companies understood the Latino various cultural differences and made an effort to entice young women with pro-tobacco sexual ads with a lot of glamour innuendoes.

**The conclusion:** The youth from the Latino community is a major target of the tobacco companies in their ads (on TV and Spanish language magazines).

## SCHOOLS

The consensus of the key informants is that because the tobacco ads are targeting youth major anti-tobacco campaigns should be initiated for prevention. The Latino student population in Yakima County is 23,251 per the ESD 105. The state mandated curriculum design does not address the educational needs of Latino farmworker parents and students. There is no parental involvement. The interviewees did not indicate whether they knew if the schools had tobacco education. Of the 15 school districts only 7 districts used the anti-tobacco curriculum.

**The conclusion:** Many of the respondents expressed a great concern for the tobacco education of children in the schools because they felt that parents working with teachers would most certainly work in the prevention and control of tobacco.

## COMMUNITY READINESS: Stage 4. Preplanning for some community action.

Most key informants felt that it was about time major anti-tobacco campaigns needed to be funded by the state. The most effective media means most frequently mentioned were Radio and TV anti-tobacco messages in the Spanish language to the Latino community. They felt that the communities lacked education and information as to the dangers of

smoking and the health ill effects of second hand smoke. Those most affected were children, the elderly and people, in general, who went to places where smoking was allowed such as in Latino restaurants.

Many felt that the many social services in their communities would provide space for educational meetings or even support in tobacco prevention if given the appropriate funding. In Yakima County there are numerous community based organizations that could help. For community education, Radio Cadena (KDNA) was frequently mentioned.

In Western Washington the most frequently recognized organizations were: Community and Migrant Health Center (SeaMar), El Centro de La Raza and the State Department of Health.

**In conclusion:** Most respondents felt the communities had positive attitudes and that churches, schools, community based organizations, Spanish language radios stations like Radio KDNA, MECHA students, and all other Latino, Chicano organizations should be involved in a major anti-smoking campaign effort focusing on the Latino community.

## **COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE**

Many respondents felt that the leadership and the numerous community based organizations along with spiritual organizations were already in-place to conduct an anti-tobacco campaign in the Latino community.

Many felt that we needed tobacco information to raise the level of awareness of the communities by using locally developed Spanish language ads for radio and television. Many respondents did not mentioned the dangers of second hand smoke. Also, there is a general feeling that even though tobacco is addictive lack of funding prevents any real anti-tobacco campaigns from starting. And if there is real funding the other suggestions are: Develop outreach programs, initiate community meetings with local leadership, develop Spanish literature or informational pamphlets that would be easy to read by low-income Latino folks, involve the churches, push for schools to teach about tobacco, educate the parents, and by all means reach out to the Latino farmworker.

Also mentioned for tobacco education were Spanish movies, Spanish language newspapers and personal contact with people through community meetings involving spiritual organizations. Many key informants suggested that radio and television stations carry life call in talk shows; informational capsules; mini-dramas; and whenever possible conduct tobacco educational outreach programs. It was strongly suggested that there should be partnerships established between community based organizations, public schools, Health Districts, Yakima American Lung Association, State Department of Health, migrant clinics, and migrant day cares, and Latino organizations to create and implement "tobacco counter-marketing campaigns" throughout the State of Washington.

## **Conclusion:**

The Latino community has numerous Spanish speaking radio stations and Spanish language newspapers and there is a general consensus that numerous community based organizations have been in existence for many years and which could be natural means of tobacco education for prevention and control. On both side of the mountains a great number of migrant and community health organizations are already serving the Latino community (Sea-Mar and the Farmworkers Health Centers). For farmworker parental education and involvement, several large organizations can be identified (Washington State Migrant Council and EPIC). Spiritual organizations such as the local churches were frequently suggested as avenues of reaching Latinos through local events and community meetings.

### **TOBACCO POLICY**

Four people mentioned the Surgeon General's warning label and again the Vietnam Veteran said that it should be in Spanish. Most key informants were not aware of any other policy with the exception of the Minors. Several people mentioned the state policy of non-smoking in public buildings and some restaurants had non-smoking sections. Half of the key informants wondered where the tobacco settlement monies were being spent and for what purposes.

### **TOBACCO CESSATION**

Very few of the interviewees had any knowledge as to where to refer a smoker who wanted to quit. Most said that they did not know of any community education that was involved in tobacco prevention and control. Many said that anti-tobacco ads were not visible in their community. Hardly anyone talked about a tobacco quit line. The majority of the key informants kept suggesting that there are enough community leaders and organizations to educate the community provided there was money. As a group the focus seemed to be the teens, adults who wanted to quit, pregnant women, parental intervention and the issue of the dangers of second hand smoke to everybody.